



TD GAME

About

This TD game is designed to be used as a tool in workshops including transdisciplinary (TD) training activities. This game was developed by Laila Sandroni and Fany Ramos Quispe in the context of the Science Technology and Policy (STeP) Fellowship Program 2022 Conference hosted by the InterAmerican Institute for Global Change Research and has been widely used as part of TD training activities. Documents citing all sources and subsequent publications and modifications can be found on the TD Academy website.

This game harnesses the power of storytelling to facilitate a shared understanding of TD practice and the challenges and opportunities in this space. It also identifies approaches proven to work that may be successfully replicated and adopted in different contexts, thereby advancing TD practices. The cards also intend to spark personal reflection on your experiences to be shared during the game.

The TD Game can be used with groups new to or familiar with the TD approach. Variations for how the game might be adapted to these two audiences are provided in the instructions.

As a result of this game, participants will:

- get to know each other and understand the experience that they already contributed as TD practitioners;
- identify the challenges and opportunities they have faced when using a TD approach and how they addressed them;
- recognize that they have been engaged in TD practices and feel more empowered as TD practitioners/researchers;
- make the connection that their practices related to integrating non-academic knowledge are TD science and acknowledge this concept as a space for capacity building and creativity.

Timing



The game requires between 75 and 90 minutes.

The time may be divided as:

- 15 minutes: Pre-game presentation
- 30 minutes: Story sharing
- 15-20 minutes: Sharing insights and strategies
- 10 minutes: Looking for additional strategies (only groups familiar with TD framework)
- 15 minutes: Plenary debrief

Pre-game presentation

The game dynamics benefit from a pre-game presentation led by the facilitator(s). The objective of the pre-game presentation is to convey four messages that help frame the context for the activity. The recommended presentation may be modified to suit the audience.

Recommended presentation (15 minutes)

1.- Share that TD (“transdisciplinarity” or “transdisciplinary”) covers a wide range of practices. People don’t need to use the term “TD” to be involved in TD activities or aspects. Our presentations delve deeper into TD and related participatory science practices, such as citizen science, engaged science, evidence-based policy, post-normal science, and participatory methods.

Message: *“Don’t hesitate to share your stories if you think any of the cards apply to you, even if you’ve never called yourself a TD researcher.”*

2.- Share a sample TD story, including challenges and opportunities. This story could be shared by the facilitator or by a guest speaker.

Recommended template for a story:

a.Background: What led you to work in the science-policy-society (TD collaborations)?

b.What are the three main points/aspects you identify as the most challenging when working with those collaborations?

c.How did you (seek to) overcome those challenges?

d.Which were the main opportunities you have found in fostering collaborations with policymakers/other stakeholders?

Message: *“If you have been inspired by these stories, challenges, and opportunities, you too have stories to share.”*

3.- Share that this is a safe space that aims to create opportunities for learning from experiences. In this setting, it is possible to share and highlight issues that might be tricky to address in more traditional spaces for interaction (congresses, conferences, etc.).

Message: *“Tell us about your backstory! Share the details of your challenges and opportunities so we can all learn.”*

4.- Share that the objective of the game is to extract insights that can be used to lay the groundwork for future and existing projects.

Message: *“Please seize this opportunity to look at your path through a new lens, relating the phrases on the cards to how you could incorporate these experiences for crafting a better TD project.”*

How to play the TD game

Materials required:

- Challenge cards
- Opportunity cards
- One Sharing Stone per group (any object that can be used as a “talking stick”)
- Sticky notes
- Pens

Setup

Workshop participants or students are divided into groups of 6 to 8 people. If the workshop is aimed at teams working on specific TD research projects, they should work together during the activity. Smaller teams can be combined with others to create the groups.

- Each group receives a random mix of 6 cards (3 opportunities and 3 challenges) and a Sharing Stone placed in the center of the group.
- Each participant receives some sticky notes and a pen.

Storytelling (30 minutes)

1. The group selects one person as the first player.
2. The first player selects a card and reads it out loud.
3. The other players reflect individually on how the phrase on the card relates to their own experience.
4. Anyone feeling inspired takes the Sharing Stone and tells their story related to that card. (The person who picked the card cannot be the one telling their story.)
5. The story should not last more than 3 minutes. The player who selected the card is responsible for timekeeping.
6. When the time ends, the sharing stone is returned to the center of the circle.
7. After the story has been shared, the timekeeper sets a timer for an additional minute, and everyone can capture insights on sticky notes before the next round.
8. The person who shared their story picks the next card, and the game continues until the time is up or there are no more cards left.

Sharing insights (and strategies) (15-25 minutes)

Option A - For groups new to the TD framework (15 minutes)

- Each person in the small groups gets 1 minute to share the insights they captured on their sticky notes and what they now understand about the TD approach.
- The group decides which three key insights to report back in plenary.

Option B - For groups familiar with the TD framework (25 minutes)

1. After the story-sharing activity, the group appoints a note-taker to capture recommended strategies on sticky notes. Instruct the note-taker to write one strategy per sticky note.
2. Each person in the small groups gets 2 minutes to share the insights on their sticky notes and add strategies for how they might apply these insights to address challenges or leverage opportunities in their current and future projects.
3. Note-taker captures the strategies on sticky notes.
4. Allow 15 minutes for sharing insights and strategies.

Invite the group to take an additional 10 minutes to discuss the insights shared and develop additional strategies that come to mind for how they might apply these insights to address challenges or leverage opportunities in their current and future projects.

Plenary debrief (15-20 minutes)

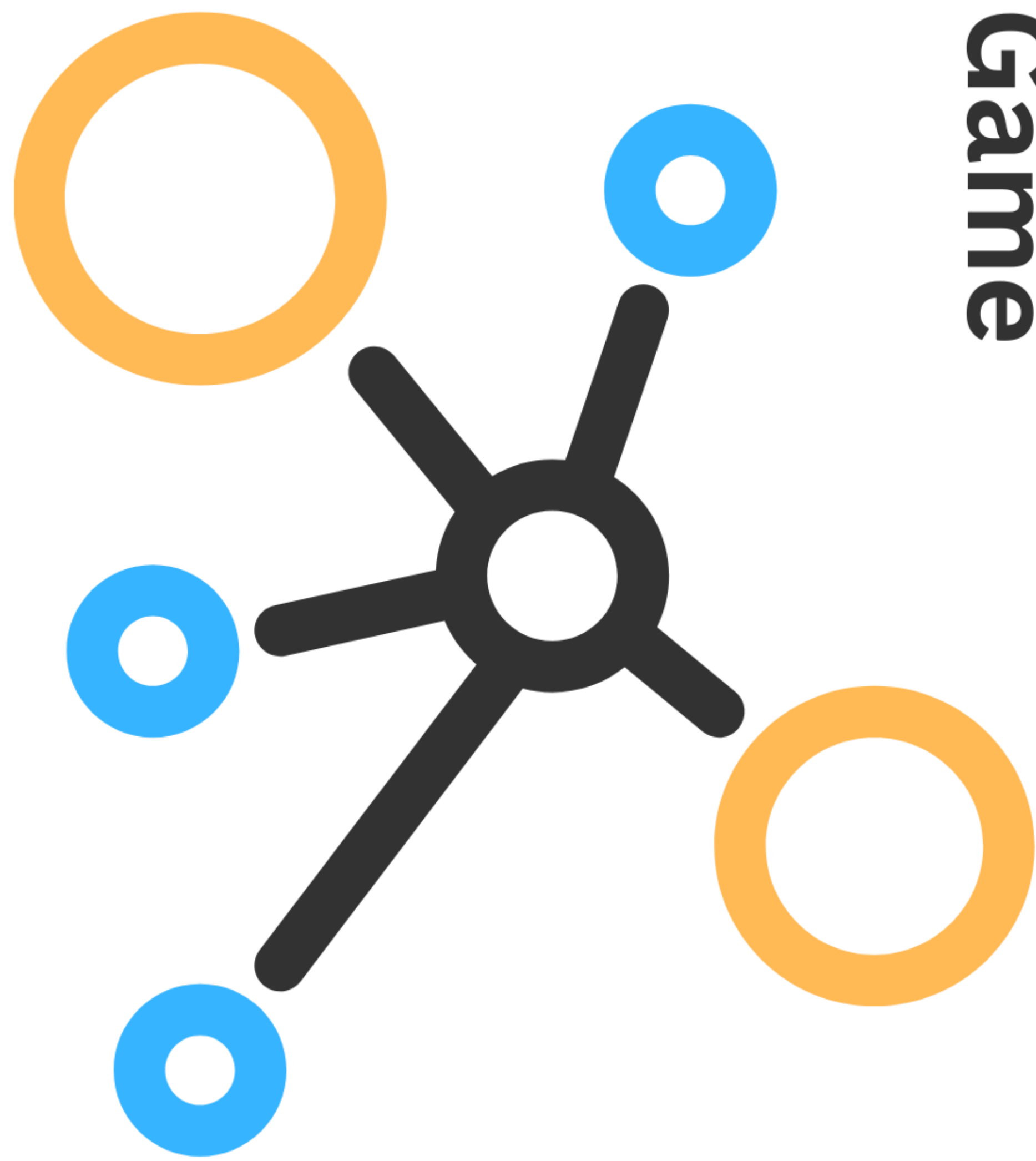
Option A - For groups new to the TD framework (15 minutes)

1. Invite each group to select three key insights from the plenary with all the other groups.
2. Invite participants to respond in plenary to the prompt: “What do you now know about the TD approach that is interesting and useful?”

Option B - For groups familiar with the TD framework (20 minutes)

1. Organize the sticky notes produced by each group (separate insights and strategies) on flipcharts in the room and invite participants to peruse the output from other groups to find additional strategies they might adopt.
2. Invite participants to respond in plenary to the prompt: “What are some additional insights and strategies that you are taking with you from this session?”

TD Game



CHALLENGE



Miscommunication
between different
stakeholders in the
group

CHALLENGE



Conflicting
priorities among
different partners

CHALLENGE



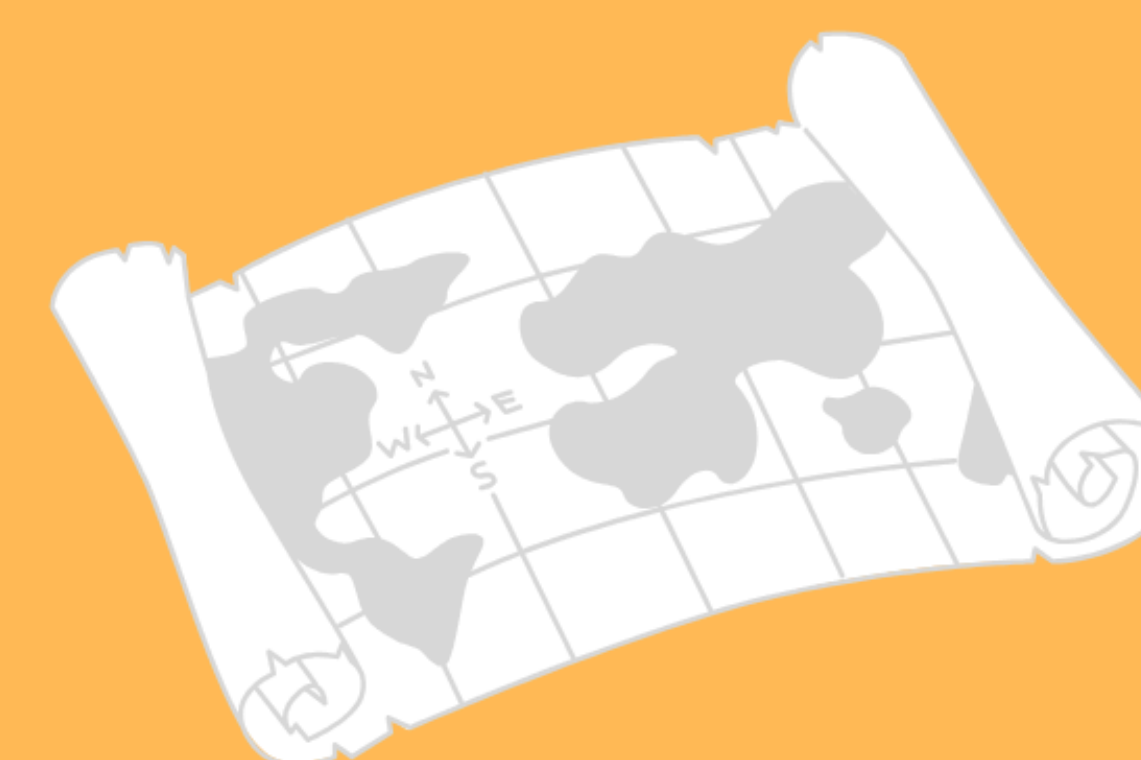
Power asymmetries
in the team

CHALLENGE



Managing
expectations across
the partners

CHALLENGE



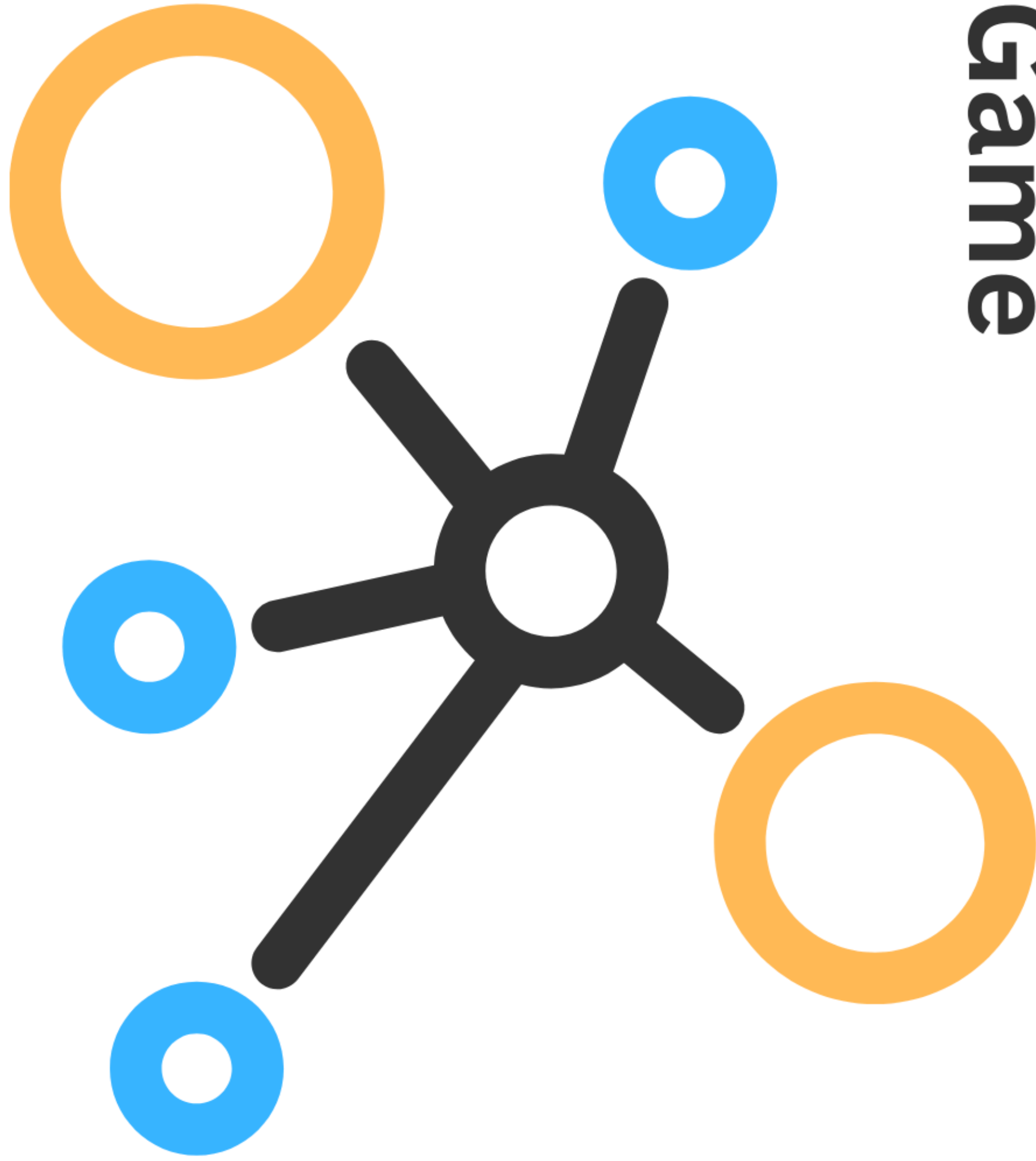
Lack of self-
awareness of
colonial attitudes/
approaches

CHALLENGE

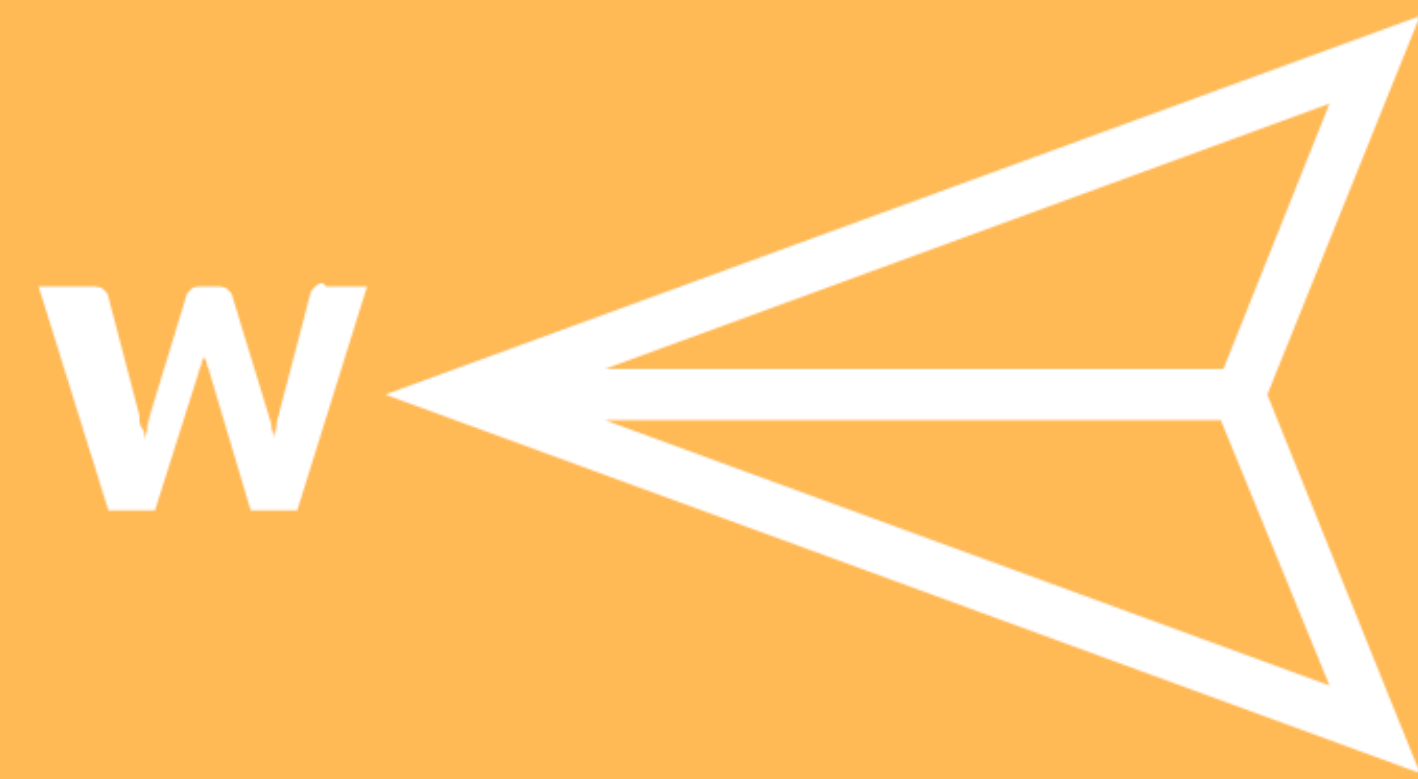


Academic timelines
versus other
stakeholders

TD Game



CHALLENGE



System implicitly continues to value Western knowledge over other forms of knowledge

CHALLENGE



Disparities in sharing the work (load) and available funds

CHALLENGE



Lack of funding for some parties/ stakeholders

CHALLENGE



Doubts about when and how to include different stakeholders in the project

CHALLENGE



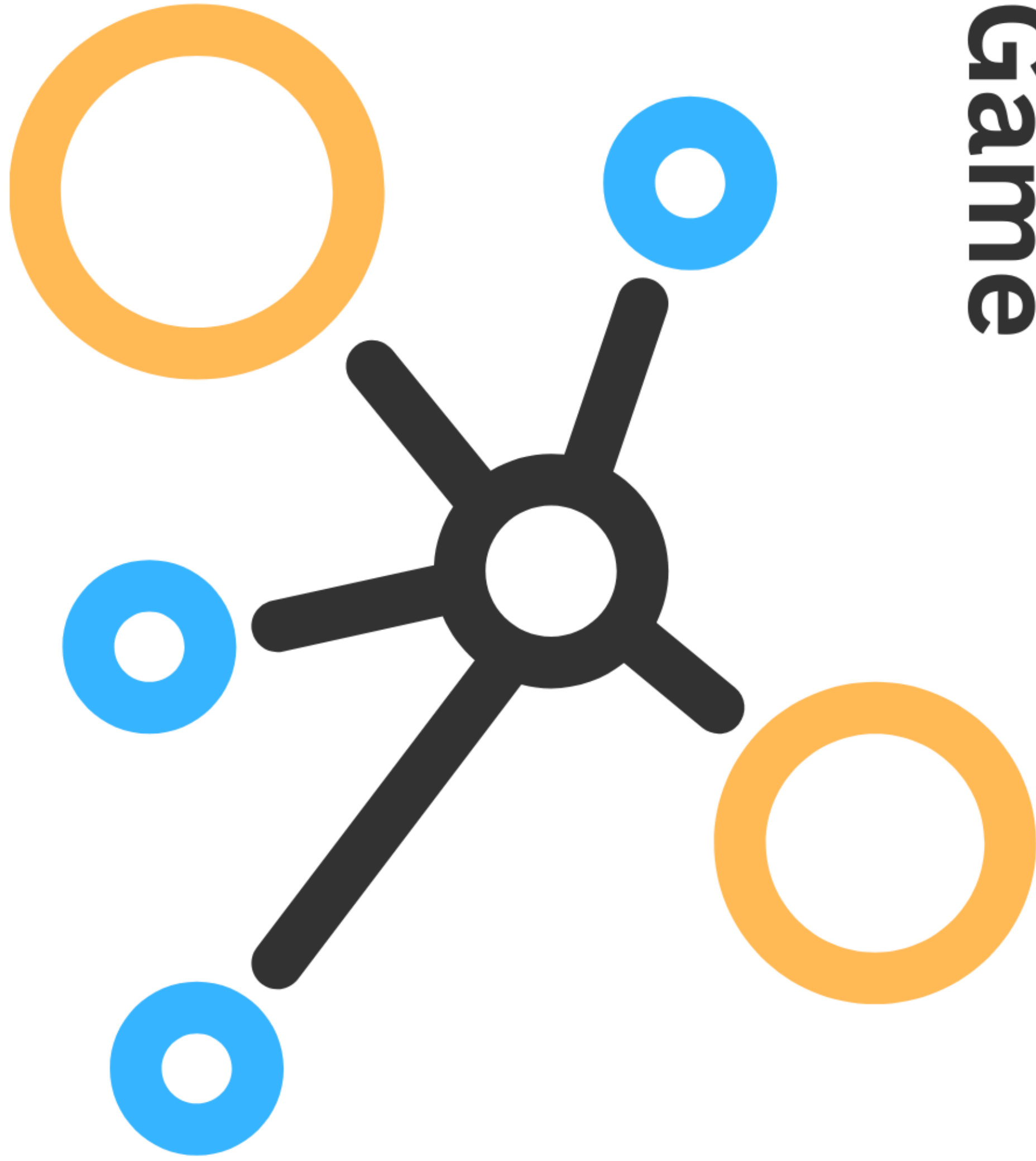
Lack of tools for dialogue and negotiation

CHALLENGE



Not knowing how to work with conflict

TD Game



OPPORTUNITY



Developing skills to harness both cognitive and emotional intelligence

OPPORTUNITY



Embracing other systems of knowledge with humility

OPPORTUNITY



Revealing and overcoming unconscious biases

OPPORTUNITY



Sharing learning experiences that extend beyond the project

OPPORTUNITY



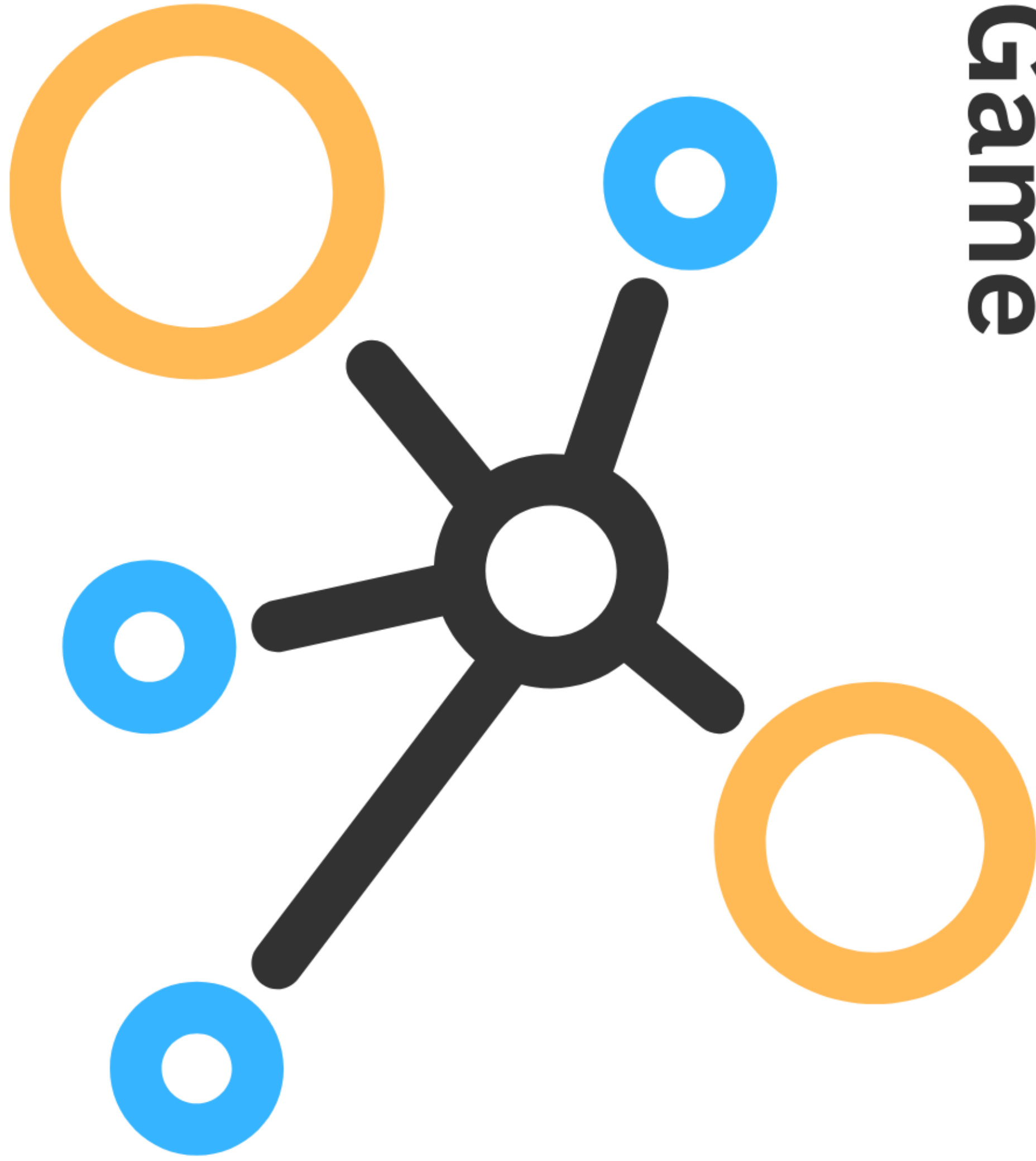
Creating adaptive ways of working together in order to be inclusive

OPPORTUNITY



Placing an emphasis on co-learning and listening

TD Game



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Learning to use new tools, such as arts, to engage with the communities involved

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Adopting diverse communications channels

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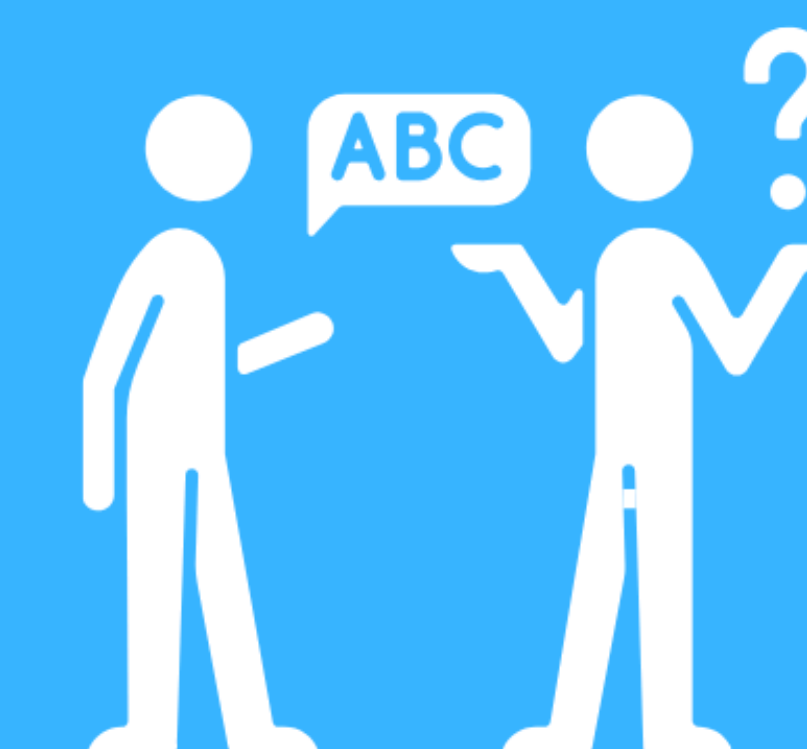
Learning to be in listening mode

OPPORTUNITY



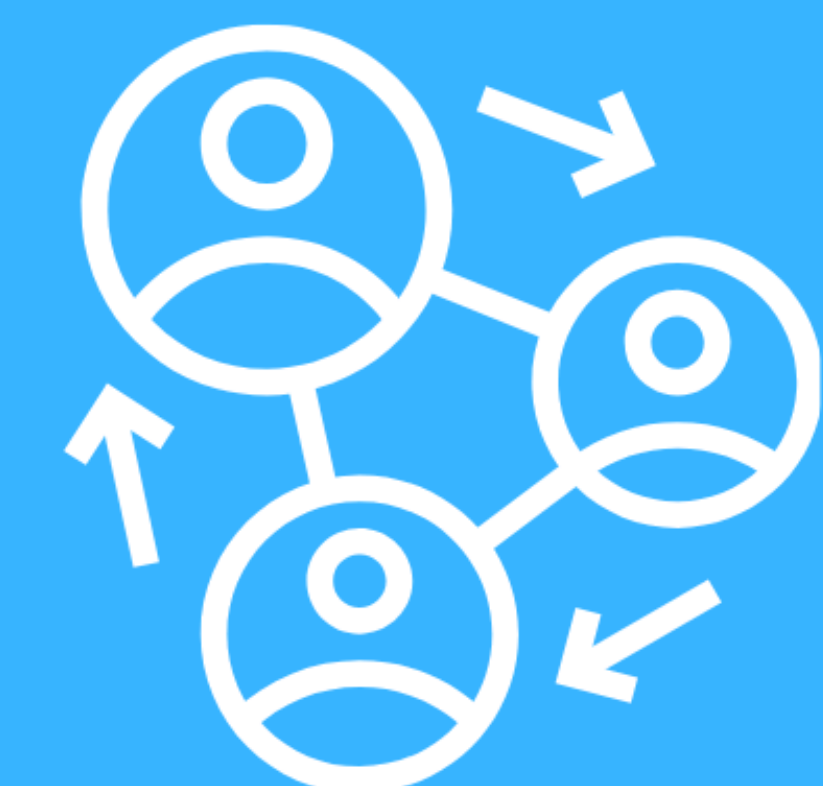
Committing to a long-term process of engagement and trust building

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Reducing the use of jargon

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Enhancing frequent interaction among the team